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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC 01030-85
27 February 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: Robert D. Vickers, Jr.
National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT: Latin America Warning and Forecast Meeting
February 1985

1. On 20 February 1985, the Latin American Warning Meeting discussed developments in Peru, Chile, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Peru

2. DDI/OGI led a discussion of the two principal armed opposition groups, the 1,500-2,000 member Sendero Luminoso (SL) formed in 1980 and active throughout the central and southern highlands, and the 100-member Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), active in Lima and Cuzco. Neither is likely to succeed in causing nationwide disruptions in the forthcoming April Presidential elections. In recent months, the SL appeared to be declining in strength, and its expansion into more northerly areas may reflect its being "squeezed" by Peruvian security forces. But Peruvian security forces are hampered in their efforts by the difficulties of operating at high altitudes, their deficiencies in the Indian languages spoken there, and the lack of priority in acquiring suitable counterinsurgency equipment--instead they want Mirages. At best, as even the Peruvian military concede, they face a five- to ten-year struggle against these armed opposition groups.

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Chile

4. DDI/ALA presented a strong argument that President Pinochet's ouster of two moderates from the Cabinet--Interior Minister Jarpa and Finance Minister Escobar--as well as his extension of the state of siege underscore Pinochet's determination to adhere strictly to the constitutional transition timetable, which specifies a Presidential plebiscite in 1989 and congressional elections a year later. In the face of Pinochet's actions the moderates appear to be in disarray, although many of them hope to use the Uruguayan Presidential inauguration as a forum for mobilizing Latin American opposition. Meanwhile, the armed opposition, spearheaded by the Communist Party which reportedly has doubled in membership in the last year, plans a new wave of violence in March, including bombings and attacks on military personnel and bases.

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Nicaragua

6. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] who are in Nicaragua supporting for the regime. These figures have been coordinated at the working level in the Community.

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Soviets-- 50-75, instead of the previous estimate of 40-50; some of these are probably assisting with the newly-arrived MI-24/25 helicopters.

East Germans-- 60-80, instead of the previous estimate of 60-70; most are advising the Minister of Interior, the remainder are helping maintain the large fleet of East German trucks.

Libyans-- 25-50, most of whom are serving as advisers or technicians for the Nicaraguan air force and airline. There was much discussion of a recent report suggesting a considerably higher figure, which would include military engineers.

PLO--15-30, most assigned to the air force or airline.

North Korea--15, most presumably assisting with the four patrol craft delivered to the Nicaraguans.

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Vietnamese, Bulgarians, Czechs--

None firmly identified, although some analysts suspect there may be at least a few Bulgarians.

Marxist guerrillas--

"Several hundred" persons, including Salvadorans, Costa Ricans, Hondurans, Colombians, Chileans, Ecuadorans and Brazilians, and possibly other nationalities. Many of these have been used against the Contras, and their presence yields at least strong moral support for the regime.

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El Salvador

8. DIA summarized reporting [redacted] non-Salvadorans identified in recent years as assisting the FMLN as combatants, medical personnel, technicians (including armorers) and psyops specialists.

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Nicaraguans--DIA estimates there are about 25 at any one time

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Cubans--A few [redacted]

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Spanish--The PCE appears to have about 10 at any one time.

Dominicans--The PCD contingent is about 14, with new personnel replacing those completing tours.

Americans--There has been [redacted] a "gringo unit" near San Vicente.

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Others--One or two each from Venezuela, France, Mexico, Finland, Brazil and North Korea.

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